UNITED
NATIONS

E

Economic and Social Council

Distr.
GENERAL

E/1993/73
14 June 1993

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Substantive session of 1993
Geneva, 28 June-30 July 1993
Item 3 of the provisional agenda*

OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT

Progress report on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 47/199

Report of the Secretary-General

CONTENTS

		Paragraphs	Page
I.	INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY	1 - 16	3
II.	CURRENT CONTEXT OF OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT	17 - 27	6
III.	PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION	28 - 47	9
	A. Country strategy note	29 - 33	9
	B. Harmonization and adaptation of programming cycles	34 - 36	11
	C. Programme approach	37 - 41	12
	D. National execution	42 - 47	13
IV.	PROGRAMME SUPPORT	48 - 67	15
	A. Decentralization	49 - 51	15
	B. Simplification and harmonization	52 - 55	16

* E/1993/100.

CONTENTS (continued)

		Paragraphs	Page
C.	Evaluation, monitoring and audit	56 - 59	17
D.	Common premises	60 - 62	18
E.	Training	63 - 67	19
V.	RESIDENT COORDINATOR SYSTEM	68 - 79	20
A.	Guidelines for the strengthening of the resident coordinator system	70 - 71	21
B.	Coordination mechanisms	72 - 73	22
C.	Headquarters and field-level support	74 - 77	23
D.	Recruitment issues	78 - 79	24
VI.	THEMATIC ISSUES	80 - 86	25
A.	Science and technology for development	80 - 81	25
B.	Human development	82 - 83	25
C.	Economic and social reforms	84 - 86	26

Annexes

I.	OVERVIEW OF THE WORK PROGRAMME FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION 47/199	27
II.	THE COUNTRY STRATEGY NOTE	34
III.	THE PROGRAMME APPROACH	38
IV.	NATIONAL EXECUTION AND IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS	44

I. INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY

Introduction

1. The present progress report, prepared in accordance with paragraph 54 of General Assembly resolution 47/199 of 22 December 1992, is being submitted only a few months after the adoption of the resolution. It is therefore of a preliminary character as regards some of the provisions of the resolution. None the less, given the fact that resolution 47/199 builds directly on the reforms called for by the General Assembly in resolution 44/211 of 22 December 1989, and that action is under way in the implementation of the latter resolution, the report provides information on the progress made in such essential areas as programme approach, national execution, decentralization and training.

2. The report reflects the concept contained in paragraph 2 of resolution 47/199, in which the Assembly stressed the need to implement all the elements of resolution 44/211 in a coherent manner, keeping in mind their interlinkages. Such an approach is essential given the inherent operational linkages among the various provisions of both resolutions. This first progress report therefore takes a comprehensive approach, grouping all elements under four related headings: programme development and implementation; programme support; resident coordinator system; and thematic issues.

3. The United Nations system considers that the full implementation of resolution 47/199 requires concerted collective and individual action by all organizations of the system engaged in operational activities for development, within the scope of their institutional mandates and guidance of their governing bodies. To ensure this coherence and complementarity of action, the Assembly, in paragraph 53 of the resolution, provided for: "an appropriate management process containing clear guidelines, targets, benchmarks and time-frames". Thus, these elements of a management plan are presented as an integral part of the report, together with up-to-date information on progress made on each major subject.

4. Since the beginning of 1993, energetic steps have been taken by the United Nations system to pursue the implementation of reforms generated by Assembly resolution 44/211, while initiating action on new provisions of Assembly resolution 47/199. Thus, The Consultative Committee on Programme and Operational Questions (CCPOQ) of the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) devoted a large part of its first session of 1993 to achieving agreement on common interpretations of the programme approach and national execution, and on the best manner of proceeding with the country strategy note. Moreover, it reviewed the overall work-plan and mechanisms to make further progress on such matters as decentralization, simplification and harmonization of rules and procedures - including in the area of evaluation, monitoring and audit - as well as the resident coordinator system and training. An inter-sessional meeting of CCPOQ in early June reviewed progress and the work-plan prior to the present session of the Economic and Social Council.

5. Furthermore, the Joint Consultative Group on Policy (JCGP) initiated action at its high-level meeting in January involving various aspects of the resolution, and assigned specific tasks to its various subgroups. Progress was reviewed periodically at its General Meeting, most recently on 21 May. The

high-level meeting met again in extraordinary session on 18 April to deal with the implementation of the resolution, particularly the country strategy note, the resident coordinator system and common premises.

6. The work of these inter-agency mechanisms, and their various subgroups and ad hoc working groups, form the backbone of common action by the funds, programmes and specialized agencies of the United Nations system. Moreover, the United Nations is providing the required overall guidance. The results achieved and plans made are reflected in the present progress report.

7. Furthermore, the Assembly, in paragraphs 51 and 54 of resolution 47/199, ensured that action taken by governing bodies of the United Nations system and the executive heads would be incorporated in the progress reports for 1993 and 1994. The relevant information will be made available to the Economic and Social Council separately.

8. The Secretary-General was requested, in paragraph 52 of resolution 47/199, "to ensure that the provisions of the present resolution are fully implemented by all the organs, organizations and bodies of the United Nations system". In discharging that task, he requested the Under-Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development to take primary responsibility for coordinating the implementation of the resolution.

9. Moreover, as concerns action at the country level, the Secretary-General indicated in a letter to all resident coordinators that he considered it of the utmost importance that they and senior colleagues of the United Nations system considered carefully the implications of the resolution and worked towards its full implementation. Furthermore, he requested the Under-Secretary-General, who assists the Secretary-General in providing policy guidance to operational programmes and field offices, to take the necessary follow-up action. Subsequently, letters were issued by the Under-Secretary-General to resident coordinators, as well as to the executive heads of funds, programmes and specialized agencies to initiate action on various matters. The executive heads of JCGP and other United Nations organizations have issued follow-up letters in support of a joint effort in the implementation of the resolution. This process of consultation and cooperation will be intensified over the course of the implementation of the resolution.

Summary

10. The report is organized on the basis of the following considerations: (a) the coherent and comprehensive implementation of all elements of Assembly resolution 47/199, building on the work resulting from Assembly resolution 44/211; (b) an overall management plan, in accordance with paragraph 53 of resolution 47/199, used as a central organizing concept of the report, indicating targets and guidelines and related progress, and complemented by an overview work programme containing also benchmarks (see annex I below); (c) information on measures taken by the governing bodies and executive heads of the funds, programmes and specialized agencies of the United Nations system, in accordance with paragraphs 51 and 54 of resolution 47/199 (to be made available separately).

11. The report begins by placing the implementation of resolution 47/199 in the context of the current environment in which the operational activities for development within the United Nations system operate. Section II discusses some of the key factors affecting this environment, including the continuing challenges facing many developing countries; the difficult climate of development aid, in general, and of financing the operational activities provided through the United Nations system, in particular. The continuing evolution of the response of the organizations of the United Nations system in meeting the changing requirements of developing countries and in implementing new and emerging internationally established development-oriented strategies is also reviewed.

12. Section III groups together the elements of resolution 47/199 which deal with programme development and implementation. As concerns the country strategy note, progress was initiated by revising the ACC guidance note (see annex II below). The interest of recipient Governments in preparing a country strategy note is being ascertained through resident coordinators. Consultations with interested national officials is planned as part of an effort to refine practical guidelines, which translate paragraph 9 of resolution 47/199 into action in interested countries. As concerns the harmonization of programming cycles, JCGP is in the process of introducing measures to harmonize and adapt to national cycles in all countries where this is possible. It may be recalled that the Assembly, in paragraphs 13 and 22 of resolution 47/199, requested early action by the Secretary-General on two specific and related questions: a common interpretation by the United Nations system on the programme approach and national execution. Agreement on these subjects was reached at the first session of the Consultative Committee on Programme and Operational Questions (CCPOQ) of the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC). Sections III.C and III.D contain the results of this work.

13. Section IV deals with elements which are essentially of a management and administrative nature in support of programmes. Their overarching objective is to achieve effectiveness and efficiency through decentralization and the strengthening of capacity at the country level. A significant effort is being made to achieve harmonization and simplification of rules and procedures guiding operational activities for development, including evaluation and management audit. Specific progress is reported on the elaboration of a common manual of the United Nations system; the focus in the short term is on practical action which lightens the burden on recipient countries. Plans are being developed to substantially increase common premises in a cost-effective manner, taking into account local conditions. Training support includes an expansion to country levels and the involvement of nationals responsible for operational activities for development.

14. In section V, the report deals with the provisions of the resolution on strengthening the resident coordinator system. This important question is reviewed under four headings: (a) matters pertaining to the implementation and monitoring of ACC arrangements and guidelines on the strengthening of the resident coordinator system (sect. V.A); (b) the issue of coordination mechanisms as part of the resident coordinator system, including field-level committees (sect. V.B); the provision of substantive and financial support to strengthen the resident coordinator function (sect. V.C); broadening the recruitment of resident representatives/resident coordinators to include members

of JCGP and other organizations of the United Nations system and increasing the transparency of the selection process. On all of these issues consultations are in progress to identify appropriate action.

15. Section VI covers three thematic issues arising from resolution 47/199. As concerns science and technology for development, reference is made to action by the Commission on Science and Technology for Development and the draft resolution before the present session of the Economic and Social Council. On human development, the Council is advised of the existence of current reports on the involvement of the United Nations system in supporting human resource development and human development. Recent action with respect to support for countries undergoing economic and social reforms is also provided.

16. As concerns the annexes, the attention of the Council is drawn to annex I, which provides an overview of the work programme for the implementation of the resolution, including benchmarks. The remaining annexes contain relevant texts developed within ACC on the country strategy note, the programme approach and national execution.

II. CURRENT CONTEXT OF OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT

Conditions facing recipient countries

17. As noted in the World Economic Survey, 1993, the world economic situation continues to be difficult - a trend that is likely to persist in 1993 - with its inevitable consequences for the poorest countries. The average rate of growth in developing countries, stalled at 3.5 per cent in the three previous years, improved in 1992 to nearly 6 per cent, but with great diversity of growth among countries. In Asia, a dramatic rise in China's growth rate in 1992, sound financial policies and ongoing structural reforms in Bangladesh, India and Pakistan contributed to the robust performance of the region. In Latin America and the Caribbean, overall output growth slowed in 1992, to an average of 2 per cent, and in Africa to just 1 per cent.

18. The situation in some central European countries shows improvement, while the economic conditions in the former Soviet Union continues to deteriorate. Real gross national product (GNP) in the Russian Federation is estimated to have fallen about 19 per cent in 1992, after a 9 per cent decline in 1991. In many other countries of the region, output losses have been even larger. A reversal of these adverse factors is not anticipated in the near term and output is expected to decline further in 1993 in most of these countries.

19. These economic indicators are only one sign of the formidable challenges facing most recipient countries. As indicated in recent reports of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) (The State of the World's Children, 1993), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (Human Development Report, 1993) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) (The State of World Population), as well as in other reports within the United Nations system, the gap between developed countries and most developing countries continues to widen on key indicators. This is particularly true as concerns income distribution, malnutrition, infant mortality rates, population rates and illiteracy. Moreover, extreme problems caused by civil unrest and other strife affect an

increasing number of persons, often among the most vulnerable population groups, placing particularly difficult demands on the operational activities for development of the United Nations system. Often considered a partner of first choice in these difficult and critical tasks, the United Nations system is seeing its capacity to respond stretched to the limit, particularly in view of a pervasive resource shortage facing practically all parts of the system.

20. As the reforms initiated by the General Assembly in resolution 44/211, and now being carried forward in resolution 47/199, are taking hold in improving the efficiency and effectiveness of operational activities, it is hoped that the confidence of donors and recipients alike will grow. This support is essential for ensuring that the benefits gained through these reforms can be translated into a real impact in recipient countries. In this connection, it should be recalled that in paragraph 3 of resolution 47/199, the Assembly stressed the need for a substantial increase in resources for operational activities for development on a predictable, continuous and assured basis, commensurate with the increasing needs of developing countries.

Resources for operational activities

21. Data on resources for operational activities covering the period 1982-1991 were provided to the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session (A/47/419, p. 15 and Add.2). Since then, provisional data for 1992 indicate significant increases of contributions in nominal terms from Governments and other sources for operational activities of the United Nations system. Contributions increased between 1991 and 1992 for UNDP and UNDP-administered funds from $1,321.4 to $1,586.7 million (18 per cent); contributions to UNFPA from $272.8 to $297.7 million (10 per cent); contributions to UNICEF from $781.6 to $918.6 million (17.5 per cent); and contributions for WFP from $1,404.6 to $1,722.4 million (22.6 per cent).

22. However, the results of the 1992 United Nations Pledging Conference for Development Activities were well below targets. Moreover, recent indications are that as a result of cutbacks in aid budgets in many donor countries, and owing to other factors, contributions to various funds and programmes, particularly core contributions, which represent their key foundation, are likely to decrease. Projections for the near future are therefore not encouraging. As a result, some funds and programmes are forced to introduce lower programme planning figures than originally established. For example, UNDP, which saw its contributions fall between 1992 and 1993, from $1,073 million to $930 million, had to decide that for planning purposes, resource levels should be set at 75 per cent of the established indicative planning figures (IPFs). These significant reductions in planning levels have serious consequences: not only could they undermine the ability of some funds and programmes to deliver essential services, but they could undermine efforts to achieve greater coherence in the system as a result of a more limited scope for existing programming arrangements. The reduction of these central funding resources could make it more difficult to ensure the complementarity and integrated use of special purpose trust funds.

Changing requirements and responses

23. Despite the current difficulties, the increased flexibility and dynamism of the operational activities of the United Nations are amply demonstrated by their ability to respond effectively to a wide array of changing requirements. Thus, the system is engaged in providing critical assistance in emergency situations in all regions of the world, while at the same time focusing on the imperative of also launching development-oriented activities in order to prevent more serious longer-term problems. Increasingly, the system is providing support in situations of fundamental economic and social transformation, and in relatively new fields in which the support of operational activities for development was requested only recently, including human rights, judicial reforms and law enforcement, improved governance and the electoral process. At the same time, the system continues to play a key role in helping Governments of the poorest countries plan effective action to ensure food security and to provide critical support for coordinating and attracting critically needed external assistance. These additional tasks are placed on top of the bulk of the concerns of operational activities for development involving the building of national capacity and to support national programmes in priority areas. Recent internationally approved development-oriented strategies also require the active involvement of and place demands on the operational activities within the system. These include Agenda 21 and other thematic programmes of action emanating from the governing bodies of the United Nations system and the General Assembly.

24. Thus, in appraising progress in the implementation of resolution 47/199, one needs to place current efforts at improving the functioning of operational activities into the dynamic context of ongoing, formidable and wide-ranging tasks. In this context, priority must be given to tasks which ensure the greatest impact at the country level in helping solve difficulties faced by many countries. Maintaining the inherent flexibility and responsiveness of the system is particularly relevant in this regard.

Special situation facing smaller specialized agencies

25. With the decline in UNDP funds and the change in modalities of provision of assistance, delivery levels have also declined, as have support cost reimbursements, to a point below a minimum threshold where the accumulated knowledge, experience and capacities of smaller specialized agencies is being eroded (with the danger that they cannot be easily restored when the resource situation improves), and where the mutually reinforcing roles of organizations in regard to their normative and technical cooperation activities will also suffer.

26. Greater levels of decentralization to the country level of United Nations system operations, the introduction of the programme approach and, more recently, the concept of country strategy notes have, and will increasingly have, an impact on the position of all organizations which do not have independent field representation, including the smaller agencies, thus further emphasizing the importance of strengthening the role of the resident coordinator.

27. The emphasis on multidisciplinary and programme approaches lend added importance to "upstream" work, including country-specific sectoral analyses that identify multisectoral linkages, set in the broader context of the total development effort. Thus, there is a particularly urgent need to pursue ways and means of enabling these organizations to discharge their key policy advisory, sectoral, analytical and project development roles through regular and extrabudgetary funds.

III. PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION

General considerations

28. The programme issues covered in this section are operationally linked and thus require cohesiveness and an integrated approach which none the less respects the diversity of the system as a function of different approaches in support of similar goals, objectives and targets. While there are advantages in preserving the creative diversity of approaches, there is also a shared recognition in the United Nations system that the implementation of the provisions of Assembly resolution 47/199 in the programme area is a matter of great priority which needs to be carried out in a coherent and integrated manner. The multidisciplinary character of the support provided by the United Nations system in response to national plans and current priorities in many countries requires greater cross-sectoral linkages and a better integration of United Nations system programmes into national development efforts. This in turn requires a more coherent United Nations system response to national requirements, including by building linkages between various elements of the country strategy note (where used), the programme approach, national execution and the resident coordinator system. This section is a preliminary attempt at presenting the provisions of resolution 47/199 in the programme area from this perspective.

A. Country strategy note

Guidelines and targets

29. The country strategy note will be implemented in accordance with paragraph 9 of Assembly resolution 47/199, in which the Assembly:

> "Stresses that, on the basis of the priorities and plans of recipient countries, and in order to ensure the effective integration of assistance provided by the United Nations system into the development process of countries, with enhanced accountability, and to facilitate the assessment and evaluation of the impact and sustainability of that assistance, a country strategy note should be formulated by interested recipient Governments with the assistance of and in cooperation with the United Nations system under the leadership of the resident coordinator in all recipient countries where the Government so chooses, taking into account the following:
>
> "(a) The country strategy note should outline the contribution the United Nations development system could make to respond to the requirements

identified by recipient countries in their plans, strategies and priorities;

"(b) The contribution of the United Nations system to the country strategy note should be formulated under the leadership of the resident coordinator, in order to promote greater coordination and cooperation at the field level;

"(c) The country strategy note should be transmitted to the governing body of each funding organization as a reference for the consideration of its specific country programme;

"(d) The specific activities of each funding organization of the United Nations system, within the broad framework of the country strategy note, should be outlined in a specific country programme prepared by the recipient Government with the assistance of the funding organizations."

30. The introduction of the country strategy note will involve the following elements:

(a) Consultations with recipient Governments to ascertain their interest in the country strategy note;

(b) Where Governments choose a country strategy note, the assistance and cooperation of the United Nations system will be available, in accordance with the provisions of the resolution;

(c) Establishment of linkages between the country strategy note and other elements in the programme area as foreseen in paragraphs 9 and 39 of resolution 47/199;

(d) Elaboration of an operational framework in early 1994 on the basis of acquired experience by monitoring and assessing the implementation of the country strategy note, and by consulting national officials of countries having chosen a country strategy note;

(e) Preparation of progress reports for submission to the Economic and Social Council in 1993 and 1994 and a full assessment in 1995 in the context of the triennial comprehensive policy review.

Progress

31. Further to the adoption of resolution 47/199 and in order to provide support to interested Governments and to resident coordinators, as well as to United Nations system field representatives, CCPOQ developed a note for the implementation of the country strategy note in countries that choose to adopt this approach (see annex II below). In the course of the implementation of the country strategy note, experience will be reviewed to help refine guidelines by spring in consultation with national officials, resident coordinators and United Nations system field teams, and United Nations system organizations.

32. In order to initiate the process of implementation, letters were issued to the resident coordinators and representatives of the funds and programmes of the

United Nations system. The letters emphasized that it was up to each Government to decide whether it wished to utilize the country strategy note. They also provided initial guidance on the process in countries selecting the country strategy note. Preliminary information shows that a number of Governments are considering choosing a country strategy note. In these cases, the required support will be provided.

33. The experience acquired over the next year will be utilized to prepare more refined guidelines for use in countries choosing the country strategy note. Particular attention will be paid to the views and experience of national officials and United Nations system country teams, including through a seminar to be organized later in 1993.

B. Harmonization and adaptation of programming cycles

Guidelines and targets

34. In paragraph 10 of resolution 47/199, the General Assembly reaffirmed that funds and programmes of the United Nations should harmonize their cycles and adapt them to national budget cycles, plans and strategies. The JCGP Subgroup on Harmonization is guiding the implementation of this provision through regional working groups.

35. In the implementation of this provision of the resolution, the following targets were established by JCGP:

(a) To achieve by 1996 80 per cent coverage of countries as concerns the harmonization of programming cycles of UNFPA, UNDP and UNICEF and to relate them to WFP projects;

(b) In countries with a national plan, or its equivalent, to adapt the programming cycles of these three organizations, in accordance with the preference of the recipient country, to the plan (either one year before the plan, the same year or a year after the plan);

(c) In countries without formal plans or their equivalent, to harmonize the programming cycles among themselves, taking into account the needs of governing bodies.

Progress

36. JCGP is in the process of taking action to achieve 80 per cent coverage in the harmonization and adaptation of programming cycles over the next two years. CCPOQ is also expected to consider this matter. The wishes of recipient Governments will be taken into account, as well as the needs of governing bodies. A country-by-country review is being carried out as part of an overall planning and monitoring effort by the JCGP Subgroup on Harmonization.

C. Programme approach

Guidelines and targets

37. In paragraph 13 of resolution 47/199, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to promote an early agreement on a common interpretation of the programme approach, including an effective methodology for evaluation, to be applied by the United Nations system and to report on this matter to the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 1993. The Council was requested to evaluate "whether effective and coordinated actions are being taken on the matter by the United Nations development system" (para. 14).

38. The following targets were established:

(a) Agreement at CCPOQ on a common interpretation;

(b) Review by the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 1993;

(c) Implementation of decisions reached by the Economic and Social Council.

Progress

39. The provisions of Assembly resolution 47/199 build on Assembly resolution 44/211, which called on all relevant governing bodies, particularly the Governing Council of UNDP, to develop more programme-oriented mechanisms for the provision of technical cooperation. In response to resolution 44/211 and other related resolutions, ACC adopted in October 1992 a common framework for the programme approach which includes objectives, definitions and guiding principles for the programme approach. Moreover, at its March 1993 session CCPOQ reviewed the subject in the light of a note prepared by the United Nations following the adoption of Assembly resolution 47/199. CCPOQ reaffirmed its commitment to the common interpretation and guiding principles adopted in 1992 (see annex II, sect. B) and agreed on a number of considerations relating to the promotion of the approach (the text agreed to by CCPOQ is reproduced in annex III, sect. A; this text will be reviewed periodically in the light of experience).

40. As regards the provisions of paragraph 13 of Assembly resolution 47/199, by which the United Nations system is required to reach early agreement on an effective methodology for evaluation as part of the programme approach, CCPOQ requested the ad hoc Inter-agency Working Group on Evaluation to take the necessary action and to report thereon at an early date. Moreover, the JCGP Subgroup on Harmonization requested JCGP members of the ad hoc Inter-Agency Working Group to prepare a work-plan on the follow-up to paragraph 13 of resolution 47/199, and to report at an early date on progress made (see sect. IV.C).

41. The growing body of experience with the programme approach in the United Nations system involves an ongoing review of concepts and practical issues in the light of experience. The requirements of governing bodies of the United Nations system regarding mandates, accountability and procedures add diversity, and to some extent complexity, to the further development of the programme

approach. As discussed in section IV.B, simplification and harmonization of rules and procedures should be undertaken keeping in view the requirement of applying the programme approach, which does not preclude the use of varying programme-component implementation modalities. Progress in simplification and harmonization would also facilitate accountability under the programme approach, a subject which is also addressed by the Assembly in resolution 47/199.

D. National execution

Guidelines and targets

42. In paragraph 22 of resolution 47/199, the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to promote an early agreement on a common interpretation of national execution to be applied by the United Nations system and to report thereon to the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 1993. The Council was requested to evaluate "whether effective and coordinated actions are being taken on the matter by the United Nations development system" (para. 23).

43. The following targets were established:

(a) March 1993: agreement by CCPOQ on a common interpretation of national execution;

(b) July 1993: review of the common interpretation at the substantive session of 1993 of the Economic and Social Council;

(c) Implementation of decisions reached by the Economic and Social Council.

Progress

44. In response to the request of the General Assembly in resolution 47/199, agreement on a common interpretation was reached at the March 1993 session of CCPOQ. The text of a common framework is contained in annex IV below. This interpretation reaffirms that Governments have the primary responsibility for the management of their development programmes and projects, that they are accountable for these programmes and projects, and that national execution will be the norm for programmes and projects supported by the United Nations system. The CCPOQ common framework pays special attention to the role of technical agencies of the United Nations system under national execution.

45. The relationship of national execution and the programme approach is manifest in the similarity of objectives contained in the two frameworks (i.e., annexes III and IV). Eventually, it might be necessary to define the relationship between national execution and the programme approach, possibly by taking as a starting-point the fact that the programme approach is essentially a methodology for identifying programme needs, determining strategies for their implementation and for organizing development activities undertaken by Governments, sometimes with external support, while national execution is a method for the management of development activities and related assistance.

46. In considering this subject, the Economic and Social Council may keep in view that the CCPOQ common framework focuses primarily on issues arising from the tripartite relationship of UNDP, Governments and specialized agencies of the United Nations system. In this connection, the role of specialized agencies in national execution is a matter deserving continuing attention. Since the activities of UNICEF, WFP and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) are guided by other principles, the framework's description of the roles of the technical agencies in the national execution context does not necessarily apply to these three organizations, which are fully committed to full national execution.

47. As concerns paragraph 16 of resolution 47/199, in which the Assembly refers to the principal responsibility of recipient countries in determining capacity, it might be useful to link this principle with current efforts at capacity-building. Moreover, it might be desirable to consider how best to undertake assessments of capacity to execute projects, including through the development and application of appropriate tools and methods.

IV. PROGRAMME SUPPORT

General considerations

48. Under the heading of programme support, important activities are being reviewed which form part of a broad strategy to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the operational activities of the United Nations system at the country level, often involving management systems and internal practices of individual organizations. While a concerted effort is being made to achieve greater coordination and collaboration in these areas, the requirements of each organization, as reflected in their respective legislative mandates and regulations, make it necessary to avoid standardization and to endorse diversity. The goal is to achieve maximum coherence and efficiency, while reducing bureaucratic bottlenecks, without unduly limiting the flexibility of programmes, funds and specialized agencies to pursue their specific mandates. Owing to the shortage of resources available to parts of the system, particular difficulties arise in connection with decentralization, but also in regard to common premises and training.

A. Decentralization

Guidelines and targets

49. Action for increased decentralization of the operational activities of the United Nations system is guided, inter alia, by paragraphs 24 to 27 of resolution 47/199. The following targets were established:

(a) Capacity and authority for programme development and approval to be further decentralized to the field offices, together with the necessary technical and substantive expertise;

(b) Consideration of the provisions of paragraph 25 of resolution 47/199 by the governing bodies of all funds, programmes and specialized agencies concerning the prescribed limits on field-level authority within approved programmes, and the shifting of resources within approved budget lines of individual components of a programme and among components of a programme, with the aim of achieving equal and uniform decentralization, to the maximum extent possible, in the context of enhanced accountability;

(c) Achieving greater use of available national expertise and indigenous technologies;

(d) Decentralization to the country level of the procurement of expertise and equipment and placing of fellowships to avoid delays.

Progress

50. Decentralization and delegation of authority is an ongoing process in a number of organizations of the United Nations system, which has to be seen in the specific context of the mandates of the organizations, the nature of services provided by them and the funds available for operational activities for development (specific information provided individual organizations will be made

available to the Economic and Social Council separately). At the collective level, questions of decentralization and delegation of authority were addressed within the framework of ACC. At its March 1993 session, CCPOQ recalled the objectives and guiding principles on decentralization it had adopted earlier and a working group led by the World Health Organization (WHO) was seized of the matter, which will be reviewed further by CCPOQ at its next session, in September 1993.

51. The Economic and Social Council may also wish to bear in mind the steps taken by the Secretary-General in the context of the restructuring of the Secretariat in the economic and social sectors involving decentralization of activities to the country level and to regional commissions. In this connection, and as noted by the General Assembly in paragraph 8 of its resolution 47/212 B of 6 May 1993 on the review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations, the Secretary-General's proposal relating to decentralization of activities to the field will be in accordance with Assembly resolution 47/199.

B. Simplification and harmonization

Guidelines and targets

52. Action under this heading is guided by paragraphs 29 to 34 of Assembly resolution 47/199.

53. The following targets were established:

(a) To develop common formats, rules and procedures as a critical requirement for the shift to a programme approach;

(b) To simplify, harmonize and adopt all formats, rules and procedures and periodicity of reports to promote national capacity-building and to assist Governments to integrate external assistance from different sources into their development process;

(c) To review evaluation and monitoring systems and strengthen the use of evaluation and monitoring;

(d) CCPOQ, and particularly JCGP, to give priority to simplifying, harmonizing and increasing the transparency of procedures relating to programme-component and project formulation, appraisal, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, and to reach agreement on a common United Nations system-wide manual for such procedures by July 1994.

Progress

54. A working group was established under the chairmanship of the United Nations open to interested organizations of the United Nations system for the development of a common manual, in accordance with paragraph 33 of resolution 47/199. The working group agreed on arrangements to develop the manual and undertook the initial work, involving operational definitions of the programme-component/project cycle. In the course of this work, it was

recognized that the development of a common manual should be part of a larger process aimed at simplifying and harmonizing rules and procedures. Of special importance in this regard is the need to focus initial work pragmatically on areas involving interfacing between the United Nations system and the recipient Governments. Among the areas being reviewed in a first stage are reporting requirements, project and programme-component documents and requests for information. Eventually, the efforts of the United Nations system might be related to initiatives by other donors. In the meantime, a special effort is being made to make the elaboration of the manual as practical as possible within the broader context of harmonization and simplification.

55. Given the dynamic and changing context of operational activities and the increasing emphasis being placed upon the adoption of the programme approach, consideration is being given to utilizing that approach as the organizing concept for the common manual. It is expected that agreement on a common manual can be reached in accordance with the deadline set in resolution 47/199 (i.e., July 1994), although work on this complex project may require a longer time-frame, particularly as the manual is extended to the entire United Nations system. In a related effort, the JCGP Subgroup on Harmonization is finalizing work on the harmonization of key terms in development cooperation covering concepts of programming and programme execution/implementation.

C. Evaluation, monitoring and audit

Guidelines and targets

56. Action on this subject is guided by the provisions of paragraphs 13, 30, 32 and 34 of Assembly resolution 47/199.

57. The following targets were established:

(a) To develop an effective evaluation methodology for the programme approach;

(b) To strengthen the financial and programme auditing capacity and accounting systems of recipient Governments;

(c) To redefine budgeting and related rules, procedures, processes and formats to become, output-, impact- or performance-oriented, rather than input- or supply-oriented;

(d) To put in place by no later than 1 January 1995, measures to enhance accountability at the field level, including effective harmonized programme monitoring, evaluation and management audit systems.

Progress

58. Both CCPOQ and JCGP are devoting their attention to the implementation of these provisions of resolution 47/199. In addition, the Inter-agency Working Group on Evaluation reviewed the implications of the resolution for its work programme. Over its nine years of experience, this ad hoc working group was able to achieve significant progress in reaching agreement on compatible and

harmonized evaluation methods within the member agencies, and refined the substance and techniques of evaluation within the system. Moreover, the ad hoc working group produced a glossary of evaluation terms based on initial work done by the Joint Inspection Unit, which will be helpful in conducting further work on this subject. It focused more recently on such relevant issues as country programme monitoring and evaluation, the monitoring and evaluation of nationally executed projects and programmes, thematic and ex post evaluation and the strengthening national capacity, as well as training. JCGP organizations of this working group have established a work-plan for the implementation of the relevant provisions of the resolution.

59. The audit provisions of resolution 47/199 are being handled as a distinct subject under the auspices of the JCGP Subgroup on Harmonization. A specialized task force involving officials dealing with auditing of operational activities is expected to develop an appropriate work-plan, which will be reviewed also at the level of CCPOQ.

D. Common premises

Guidelines and targets

60. Paragraphs 42 and 49 of Assembly resolution 47/199 guide work on this subject. The trend towards common premises and the consolidation of administrative infrastructures is guided also by paragraph 49. Since the adoption of the resolution, JCGP has been exploring how best to substantially increase the number of common premises over the next two years and, in this connection, to share administrative services.

61. ACC is guided by the interorganizational position on the sharing of common premises communicated in the 1991 report on the operational activities of the United Nations system (A/46/206/Add.3, para. 35). This position encourages the sharing of premises while recognizing the need to take account of conditions on an individual country basis. In particular, in a number of countries, sectoral ministries desired that, in view of the nature and extent of their collaboration on an ongoing basis, the sectoral agency of the United Nations be located in the relevant ministry. In other instances, the host government authority provides free or subsidized accommodation, a condition which would not be available under shared premises. Within these requirements, full use is being made of common premises.

Progress

62. Based on these considerations, much of the efforts at developing common premises currently involve JCGP (more detailed information or action by JCGP organizations will be made available to the Economic and Social Council separately). The JCGP Subgroup on Common Premises is engaged in planning a substantial and cost-effective expansion of common premises. In developing this plan, new financing modalities that will minimize financial costs are being developed.

E. Training

Guidelines and targets

63. Paragraphs 43 to 46 of Assembly resolution 47/199 contain important principles which are fully consistent with current action being taken through CCPOQ, JCGP and the International Training Centre of the ILO at Turin, Italy. Moreover, the CCPOQ Advisory Panel on Training is developing further programmes in line with the resolution.

64. The following targets were established:

(a) To continue to develop common, innovative and integrated system-wide training programmes for government officials and other nationals, as well as for staff of the United Nations system field offices in order to facilitate the introduction of innovations;

(b) To establish a training capacity internal for each country, including a scheme for training of trainers on a continuous basis as an integral function of the United Nations system field office structure;

(c) To develop capacity in the areas of programme approach, national execution, programme accountability and financial audit, support costs and evaluation and monitoring;

(d) To increase participation of national staff and members of relevant national institutions in training programmes.

Progress

65. The common training activities of the United Nations system within the framework of ACC, are in line with the provisions of Assembly resolution 47/199. In 1992, ACC endorsed an expanded programme which, together with resolution 47/199, formed the basis of a review by the CCPOQ Advisory Panel on Training in June 1993. Coordination workshops for senior field representatives are being continued, and by the end of 1993 over 40 country teams will have benefited from them. The Advisory Panel agreed that these workshops should be seen as part of a broader process that should be followed up by activities at the country level involving a full interface with national officials. Moreover, new training programmes in support of national capacity-building and the management of development programmes are being carried out by focusing on the training of trainers. An inventory of operational activities training was recently completed as an important inter-organizational information tool of CCPOQ for further harmonization of training support to operational activities.

66. Moreover, JCGP organizations have worked together in an interactive and systematic way, through the CCAQ(Per) Subgroup on Training and the JCGP Subgroup on Personnel and Training, and operationalized elements of resolution 47/199. Specifically they have:

(a) Jointly launched a combined pilot Training of Trainers course with HIV/AIDS content, at Harare in March 1993. Plans are well advanced for carrying this work into Latin America and Asia;

(b) Finished design work on a United Nations system-wide orientation package for which they have produced a video including remarks by the Secretary-General;

(c) Organized support cost training through UNDP, which took place in 1992 (over 600 United Nations agency and government officials were trained);

(d) Started planning co-sponsorship of another pilot orientation video covering all the mandates of the agencies of the United Nations system;

(e) Been actively helping the ILO Turin Centre with the design and development of resident coordinator training modules.

67. The question of resources needed to carry out this training effort continues to be a problem and is receiving considerable attention. While the further development of training has received a strong commitment of all agencies and Member States, it now has to be translated into the allocation of the necessary resources.

V. RESIDENT COORDINATOR SYSTEM

General considerations

68. The provisions of paragraphs 36 to 41 of Assembly resolution 47/199 deal with the strengthening of the resident coordinator system and field-level coordination mechanisms, particularly paragraph 39 in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to strengthen the resident coordinator system. The subject is covered under four distinct headings in view of the fact that (a) the current system operates on the basis of arrangements established by ACC, which include guidelines issued in 1990, whose implementation should be reviewed on the basis of steps detailed in section V.A; (b) the strengthening of the coordination mechanisms as part of the resident coordinator system should involve consultations with resident coordinators and United Nations system country teams and, in particular, the recipient Governments; (c) the provisions of General Assembly resolution 47/199 dealing with the strengthening of the support mechanisms of the resident coordinators will involve new steps by CCPOQ and JCGP, as well as administrative and financial measures; (d) specific action is requested of the Secretary-General in paragraph 39 of resolution 47/199, including widening the recruitment pool of resident coordinators from JCGP organizations and increasing transparency in the selection process. As foreseen in resolution 47/199, the views of recipient Governments need to be taken into account through appropriate consultations. Moreover, it should be borne in mind that the current efforts at restructuring the economic and social sectors of the United Nations, at both the intergovernmental and secretariat levels, may have implications for strengthening the resident coordinator function.

69. The implementation of the various elements of resolution 47/199 dealing with the strengthening of the resident coordinator system will be approached in a comprehensive manner. In this task, guidelines will be applied, taking into account variations in country contexts and requirements such as the categories identified in the 1992 report on the triennial comprehensive policy review (A/47/419, paras. 135-138), particularly (a) countries with a large United

Nations presence and significant United Nations system funding; (b) countries facing especially difficult circumstances and emergencies; (c) countries involved in social and economic transition; (d) countries with a small, but catalytic United Nations system presence.

A. Guidelines for the strengthening of the resident coordinator system

Guidelines and targets

70. Paragraphs 38 (c) and (e) and 39 (a), (b), (e) and (g) guide work on this subject. The following targets were established:

(a) To improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the United Nations system at the field level, through a fully coordinated multidisciplinary approach under the leadership of the resident coordinator, bearing in mind the complementarity of the system and the need for a division of labour within the respective spheres of competence of individual agencies, programmes and funds;

(b) To ensure the separate identities and, where appropriate, representation of funds and programmes at the country level in the framework of a clear and improved division of labour, in accordance with their mandates;

(c) To avoid the creation of additional bureaucratic layers;

(d) To encourage individual specialized agencies at the field level to participate fully in all aspects of the resident coordinator system;

(e) To establish, in consultation with recipient Governments, a clearer division of responsibilities for the resident coordinator and individual funds, programmes and specialized agencies;

(f) To enhance the responsibility and authority of the resident coordinator for the planning and coordination of programmes and allowing him/her to propose, in full consultation with the Government, to the heads of the funds, programmes and specialized agencies, the amendment of country programmes and major projects and programmes, where required, to bring them into line with the country strategy note.

Progress

71. ACC established guidelines on the functioning of the resident coordinator system in 1990, which were reviewed as part of the comprehensive policy review of 1992 in accordance with General Assembly resolution 46/219. These guidelines are being more fully implemented and adapted on the basis of experience acquired. Moreover, a working group was established by CCPOQ in March 1993, chaired by the United Nations. The Working Group will consider in the first instance (a) identification of specific, practical steps on the basis of information acquired on the functioning of the resident coordinator system; (b) take action on these steps in line with the provisions of resolution 47/199; (c) review the functioning of field-level committees, including the question of timely access to required multidisciplinary advice and support; (d) consider how

best to provide additional substantive and financial support to resident coordinators; (e) review the implications of paragraph 39 (b) of resolution 47/199 and help define respective roles, particularly on technical reviews of programmes and projects; (f) ensure that the appropriate technical skills are available in relation to programme requirements; (g) improve the coherence and substantive guidance on thematic programmes of a cross-sectoral nature, such as poverty alleviation and sustainable development. Moreover, consideration will be given to other practical steps to give the resident coordinator and his senior colleagues better access to the analytic and research capacity of the system, including information systems and data banks. These efforts will take into account the shifting functions of resident coordinators, including greater responsibilities in emergency situations and humanitarian assistance, planning support in disaster prevention and linking rehabilitation and development, support for the country strategy note, where applicable, and enhancing substantive collaboration.

B. Coordination mechanisms

Guidelines and targets

72. Paragraphs 36, 38 (d), 39 (c), 40 and 41 guide work on this subject. The following targets were established:

(a) To strengthen the resident coordinator function to assist Governments in mobilizing technical expertise from both inside and outside the United Nations system and to ensure coordination at the country level through, inter alia, the country strategy note;

(b) Resident coordinators to establish, where required, close cooperation with the funds, programmes and agencies at the regional and subregional levels, in order to respond to specific requests by recipient Governments;

(c) To ensure, in the context of the country strategy note, that representatives of JCGP, and all United Nations system organizations, consult with and take account of any views of the resident coordinator in the context of major programming exercises before reporting on major programming and policy issues to their headquarters;

(d) Where justified and not yet operating, to establish, in consultation with host Governments, an appropriate field-level committee, comprising United Nations system representatives, which will serve as a United Nations coordinating mechanism under the leadership of the resident coordinator;

(e) Ensure that the United Nations coordination mechanisms undertake advisory functions, including the provision of guidance and advice on proposed programmes of funding organizations, the review of agency sector strategies and evaluation and the investigation of specific problems and issues requiring a coordinated response.

Progress

73. Concerning country-level coordination mechanisms, recent surveys indicate that such mechanisms operate in varying forms in all recipient countries (further information provided by organizations will be made available to the Economic and Social Council separately). It is envisaged that, building on acquired experience, further guidance may be required in some cases, based on successful experience, in consultation with resident coordinators and other experienced field representatives of the United Nations system, taking into account the views of recipient Governments. In this task, particular attention will be given to the provisions of paragraphs 40 and 41 of resolution 47/199, as concerns the provision, through these mechanisms, of guidance and advice on proposed programmes, and the review of sector strategies and evaluations and related activities. These requirements have already been brought to the attention of resident coordinators with the request to ensure their early implementation. Implementation is being monitored through existing reporting systems.

C. Headquarters and field-level support

Guidance and targets

74. Paragraphs 38 (a) and (b) and 39 (f) guide work on this subject. The following targets were established:

(a) To achieve a further commitment of the funds, programmes and specialized agencies to work together to integrate assistance provided by the United Nations system into the development process of recipient countries in a fully coordinated manner;

(b) To tailor the United Nations system at the country level, taking into account the views of the recipient Government, to the country's specific developmental needs in such a way that it corresponds to ongoing and projected cooperation programmes rather than to the institutional structure of the United Nations;

(c) To define the responsibility in the relevant inter-agency coordination mechanisms, in particular JCGP, for providing clear guidance to resident coordinators and for ensuring that they are provided with the necessary support both at the headquarters and the field level;

(d) To introduce other practical measures to provide increased field-level support to resident coordinators.

Progress

75. Resident coordinators were given initial guidance on the implementation of resolution 47/199 through the letter of the Secretary-General referred to in paragraph 9 above, and the more detailed letter of the Under-Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development. Similar letters were issued by executive heads of other organizations of the system. Moreover, steps are being taken to reinforce communication with resident coordinators and to

ensure that substantive guidance is available to resident coordinators when requested and needed.

76. Improved communication support is being developed to ensure that resident coordinators and their colleagues are fully informed of important matters and, at the same time, that inter-country exchanges of experience can take place.

77. The problem of providing additional support to resident coordinators is being reviewed in the context of the CCPOQ working group. In previous reports to the General Assembly, most recently in the 1992 report on the triennial comprehensive policy review (A/47/419 and Add.1-3), this problem was highlighted and it was suggested that additional funding was needed to facilitate access by resident coordinators to professional and logistic support for the preparation, conduct and follow-up of various coordination activities. Provision of such funds is a recurrent request by resident coordinators. Various resident coordinators have already begun the effort to find additional funding resources to meet steadily expanding responsibilities.

D. Recruitment issues

Guidelines and targets

78. Paragraphs 37 and 39 (d) guide work on this subject. The following targets were established:

(a) To pay particular attention, in selecting resident coordinators, to quality, relevant broad development experience, managerial and team-building skills, and the capacity to develop effective and coherent coordination of the United Nations system as a whole and to integrate individual components and strategies into the development process of the country;

(b) To broaden the pool of qualified development professionals eligible for appointment as UNDP resident representatives/resident coordinators to the members of JCGP, together with increased transparency in the selection process. Other organizations of the United Nations system will also be included in this effort.

Progress

79. Consultations are taking place both within JCGP and CCPOQ on widening the pool of candidates for resident representative/resident coordinator and to make the selection process more transparent. Various ideas are being explored and some initiatives were taken by UNDP to enlarge the recruitment base (further information will be made available to the Economic and Social Council separately).

VI. THEMATIC ISSUES

A. Science and technology for development

80. In paragraph 20 of resolution 47/199, the General Assembly requested the Economic and Social Council, at its substantive session of 1993, to consider, through the Commission on Science and Technology for Development, the note by the Secretary-General on the comprehensive policy review of operational activities of the United Nations system (A/47/419/Add.1) as a means of examining the contribution of the operational activities of the United Nations system to the enhancement of the national capacities of developing countries in the field of science and technology, and to make appropriate recommendations thereon.

81. The Commission on Science and Technology for Development, having considered the matter, recommended to the Economic and Social Council that it decide to include the coordination of the activities of the United Nations system in the field of science and technology among the issues to be considered in the coordination segment of its substantive session of 1994; the Commission also recommended that the Council request the Secretary-General to prepare a report for the coordination segment containing an analysis and action-oriented proposals to improve the coordination mechanisms of organs, programmes and specialized agencies, including the World Bank, which are involved in the science and technology activities of the United Nations system; the Commission further recommended that the Council consider the note by the Secretary-General on the comprehensive policy review of operational activities of the United Nations system (A/47/419/Add.1) a valuable input to the consideration of science and technology activities in the coordination segment of the Council's substantive session of 1994 (E/1993/31, chap. I, sect. A, draft resolution III).

B. Human development

82. In paragraph 47 of resolution 47/199, the General Assembly reaffirmed the importance of human development, including human resource development, and requested the United Nations system to strengthen the support given by its operational activities, at the request of recipient countries, to sectors vital to human development. The Assembly did not ask for reporting on the subject, although paragraphs 54 and 55 of the resolution could be interpreted as covering such a provision. In view of the fact that other reports are submitted on this subject to various intergovernmental bodies, including the Council and the General Assembly, some guidance in this regard is required.

83. It is well documented that the United Nations system is devoting a large share of its development cooperation efforts to help recipient countries develop human resources and achieve human development. Specifics in this regard are provided in the annual reports of the executive heads of the funds, programmes and specialized agencies to the governing bodies of their organizations. Moreover, a report on the subject is to be submitted to the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session, in accordance with Assembly resolution 46/143 on developing human resources for development. If, in the light of this information it is still deemed essential by the Council to have before it a report on this subject, appropriate steps will be taken.

C. Economic and social reforms

84. In paragraphs 48 and 49 of resolution 47/199, the General Assembly recognized that the United Nations system had a role to play in assisting countries undergoing deep economic and social reforms, and requested the Secretary-General to ensure that the development activities of the United Nations system in new recipient countries were carried out on the basis of an integrated, unified, cost-effective and innovative approach to development cooperation and presence in the countries concerned. The United Nations system is playing an active role in countries undergoing such reforms in many parts of the world (more detailed information will be made available to the Economic and Social Council separately).

85. As concerns one region of the world, it may be recalled that, further to Economic and Social Council resolution 1992/40 on the activities of the United Nations system in the Baltic States and the Commonwealth of Independent States, a report was submitted to the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session as an addendum to the report of the Secretary-General on the comprehensive policy review of operational activities of the United Nations system (A/47/419/Add.3). That report provided information on support provided to and planned for this region by the United Nations system. These efforts are being carried forward on the basis of Assembly resolution 47/199 and decisions reached by other intergovernmental bodies of the United Nations system, particularly the Governing Council of UNDP, as well as conclusions reached at the level of ACC and action taken by the Secretary-General in response to requests of the countries concerned.

86. The report also provided preliminary information on the establishment of interim United Nations offices in some of the countries of the region. The experience acquired with these interim offices will be the subject of a report for consideration by the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session.

Annex I

OVERVIEW OF THE WORK PROGRAMME FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION 47/199

SUBJECT AND REFERENCES	GUIDELINES AND TARGETS	BENCH-MARKS	
PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION			
A. Country Strategy Note (CSN)	The concept of the CSN will be implemented in accordance with paragraph 9 of Res. 47/199. Moreover, CCPOQ agreed on a note, reflecting the provisions of the resolution which will guide the initial phase of implementation. The following targets were established: (a) Consultations with recipient governments to ascertain their interest in CSN; (b) Assistance and cooperation with governments which have elected CSN; (c) Utilization of CSN in programme and project formulation as foreseen in paras 9 & 39 of the resolution; (d) Elaboration of refined guidelines in 1994 on the basis of acquired experience by monitoring and assessing the implementation of CSN, and by consulting national officials of countries having chosen CSN; (e) Preparation of progress reports to ECOSOC in 1993 and 1994 and full assessment in 1995 in the context of the comprehensive policy review.	January 1993 March 1993 March 1993-95 March-May '93 April 1993 July 1993 Late 1993 February 1994 May 1994 July 1994 February 1995 July 1995 October 1995	Review at the JCGP high-level meeting; Consultations and agreement on a note at CCPOQ; Introduction of the concept at the Turin workshop on management of field coordination; Internal UN review of the experience acquired by various UN Org., as effort to develop guidelines; Letter to all RCs providing information on Res. 47/199 and initial guidance on the CSN; Preliminary report to ECOSOC; Seminar of national officials & UN system Rep. to develop guidelines based on initial experience; Guidelines formulated and review at CCPOQ and ECOSOC; Review of first year's experience for 1994 progress report to ECOSOC; Progress report reviewed at ECOSOC; Evaluation of two-year CSN experience launched in context of triennial policy review; Review of experience by ECOSOC; Triennial comprehensive policy review by the General Assembly.
B. Harmonization and adaptation of programming cycles	Para.10 indicates that funds and programmes of the United Nations should harmonize their cycles and adapt them to national budget cycles, plans and strategies. The JCGP Harmonization Sub-group is guiding the implementation of this provision through regional working groups. In this provision JCGP established the following targets: (a) To achieve 80 per cent coverage of countries as concerns the harmonization of programming cycles of UNFPA, UNDP, and UNICEF; (b) In countries with a national plan, or its equivalent, to adapt the programming cycles of these three organizations, in accordance with the preference of the recipient country, to the plan (either one year before the plan, the same year, or a year after the plan); (c) In countries without formal plans, or their equivalent, to harmonize the programming cycles among themselves, taking into account the needs of governing bodies.	May 1993 Sept. 1993 Early 1994 March 1994 Early 1995	JCGP agrees on action to achieve eighty percent coverage by end 1996; Review at CCPOQ; JCGP assesses experience; Targets set for remaining countries; Assessment of results in context of next triennial comprehensive policy review.
C. Programme Approach	Resolution 47/199 in para.13 requested the Secretary-General to promote an early agreement on a common interpretation of the programme approach, including an effective methodology for evaluation, to be applied by the United Nations system and to report on this matter to this substantive session of the Council. ECOSOC was requested to evaluate "whether effective and coordinated actions are being taken on the matter by the United Nations Development system". The following targets were established: (a) Agreement at CCPOQ on a common interpretation; (b) Review by ECOSOC at its substantive session of 1993; (c) Implementation of decisions reached at ECOSOC.	February 1993 March 1993 July 1993	Based on work of CCSQ(OPS) and review at JCGP, preparation of a paper by the UN containing various concepts for consideration by CCPOQ, taking into account views expressed at JCGP; Agreement on a common interpretation at CCPOQ (see annex III); Consideration by ECOSOC, including determination of appropriate follow up.

SUBJECT AND REFERENCES	GUIDELINES AND TARGETS	BENCH-MARKS	
continued...			
PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT IMPLEMENTATION			
B. National Execution.	Resolution 47/199 in para.22 requested the Secretary-General to promote an early agreement on a common interpretation of national execution to be applied by the United Nations system and to report on this matter to this session of the Council. ECOSOC was requested to evaluate "whether effective and coordinated actions are being taken on the matter by the United Nations Development system". The following targets were established: (a) Agreement at CCPOQ on a common interpretation of national execution by March 1993; (b) Review of common interpretation at the substantive session of ECOSOC for 1993; (c) Implementation of decisions reached at ECOSOC.	February 1993 March 1993 July 1993	Preparation of draft text for consideration by CCPOQ; Agreement on common interpretation at CCPOQ (see annex IV); Consideration by ECOSOC, including determination of appropriate follow-up.
PROGRAMME SUPPORT			
A. Decentralization	Actions for increased decentralization of the operational activities of the UN system is guided, inter alia, by paragraphs 24 through 27. The following targets were established: (a) Programme development and approval, capacity and authority for programme development and approval to be further decentralized to the field offices, together with the necessary technical and substantive expertise; (b) Consideration of the provisions of paragraph 25 of resolution 47/199 by the governing bodies of all funds, programmes and specialized agencies concerning the prescribed limits on field level authority within approved programmes, and the shifting of resources within approved budget lines of individual components of a programme and among components of a programme, with the aim of achieving equal and uniform decentralization, to the maximum extent possible, in the context of enhanced accountability; (c) Achieving greater use of available national expertise and indigenous technologies; (d) Decentralization to the country level of the procurement of expertise and equipment and placing of fellowships to avoid delays.	March 1993 Sept. 1993 1993-1994	Review issues at CCPOQ and re-establishment of working under lead of WHO; Review at CCPOQ; Action by organizations of the UN system, including their governing bodies in 1993 and 1994; Progress reports to ECOSOC by the Secretary-General on the basis of reports as per paras 51 and 54 of resolution;
		1994-1995	Reports.

SUBJECT AND REFERENCES	GUIDELINES AND TARGETS	BENCH-MARKS	
continued...			
PROGRAMME SUPPORT			
B. Simplification and Harmonization	Action under this heading is guided by paragraphs 29-34 of resolution 47/199. The following targets were established: (a) Develop common formats, rules and procedures as a critical requirement for the shift to a programme approach; (b) Simplify, harmonize and adopt all formats, rules and procedures and periodicity of reports to promote national capacity building and to assist governments to integrate external assistance from different sources into their development process; (c) Review evaluation and monitoring systems and strengthen the use of evaluation and monitoring; (d) CCPOQ, and particularly JCGP, to give priority to simplifying, harmonizing and increasing the transparency of procedures relating to programme-component and project formulation, appraisal, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, and to reach agreement on a common UN system-wide manual for such procedures by July 1994.	January 1993 March 1993 May 1993 May'93-May'94 October 1993 May 1994	Agreement on steps to achieve the targets; Consideration of subject by CCPOQ; Agreement on an approach to a common system manual by JCGP; Implementation of work-plan for common manual; Review at CCPOQ of related issues as part of a comprehensive approach; Completion of first phase of common manual project.
C. Evaluation, monitoring and audit	Action on this subject is guided by the provisions of paragraphs 13, 30, 32, and 34 of the resolution. The following targets were established: (a) Develop an effective evaluation methodology for the programme approach; (b) Strengthen the financial and programme auditing capacity and accounting systems of recipient governments; (c) Redefine budgeting and related rules, procedures, processes and formats to become, output-, impact-, or performance-oriented, rather than input- or supply-oriented; (d) Put in place by no later than first January 1995, measures to enhance accountability at the field level, including effective harmonized programme monitoring, evaluation and management audit systems.	February 1993 March-May 1993 June 1993 June 1993-94 September 1994 January 1995	Review of evaluation and monitoring issues in the context of the Inter-Agency Working Group on Evaluation; Review at Harmonization Sub-group of JCGP; Establishment of detailed work-plan; Implementation of work-plan; Introduction of measures at field-level; Full implementation of new measures.

/...

SUBJECT AND REFERENCES	GUIDELINES AND TARGETS	BENCH-MARKS	
continued... PROGRAMME SUPPORT			
B. Common Premises	Paragraphs 42 and 49 of resolution 47/199 guides work on this subject. Since its adoption, JCGP is exploring how best to increase substantially the number of common premises over the next two years, and to achieve consolidation of administrative infrastructures of organizations. ACC is still guided by the inter-organizational position on the sharing of common premises communicated as part of the report of operational activities of the United Nations system for 1991 (A/46/206/Add.3), para 35. This position encourages the sharing of premises while recognizing the need to take account of conditions on an individual country basis. In particular, in a number of countries sectoral ministries desired that, in view of the nature and extent of their collaboration on an ongoing basis, the sectoral agency of the United Nations be located in the relevant ministry. In other instances, the host government authority provides free or subsidises accommodation: a condition which would not be available under shared premises.	April 1993 1993-1994 1995	JCGP to review how to achieve a substantial increase of common premises; Adopting of a common position of JCGP and seeking the support of vis-à-vis the respective intergovernmental bodies; Progress will be reported to ECOSOC in 1993 and 1994 in the triennial review report of 1995.
E. Training	The resolution in paras. 43-46 sets out important principles which are fully consistent with current action being taken through CCPOS and the International Training Centre of the ILO at Turin. Moreover, the Advisory Panel of CCPOS on Training is developing further programmes in line with the resolution. The following targets were established: (a) Continuing to develop common, innovative and integrated system-wide training programmes for government officials and other nationals, as well as for staff of the UN system field offices, to facilitate the introduction of innovations; (b) Establish a training capacity internal for each country, including a scheme for training of trainers on a continuous basis as an integral function of the UN system field office structure; (c) Develop capacity in the areas of the programme approach, national execution, programme accountability and financial audit, support costs and evaluation and monitoring; (d) Increase participation of national staff and members of relevant national institutions in training programmes.	June-June '95 June 1993 1993-1995 1993-1995	Action by JCGP organizations on various joint training activities; Review the implications of the resolution at the CCSQ Advisory Panel on Training; Proceed with the joint training initiatives under the auspices of CCPOS and JCGP; Provide yearly progress reports to ECOSOC and inclusion of the area in the triennial review report of 1995.

/...

SUBJECT AND REFERENCES	GUIDELINES AND TARGETS	BENCH-MARKS	
RESIDENT COORDINATOR SYSTEM			
A. Guidelines for the strengthening of the resident coordinator system	Paras. 38 (c) (e) and 39 (a) (b) (e) (g) guide work on this subject. The following targets were established: (a) Improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the United Nations system at the field level, through a fully coordinated multi-disciplinary approach under the leadership of the resident coordinator, bearing in mind the complementarity of the system and the need for a division of labour within the respective spheres of competence of individual agencies, programmes and funds; (b) Ensure the separate identities and, where appropriate, representation of funds and programmes at the country level in the framework of a clear and improved division of labour, in accordance with their mandates; (c) Avoid the creation of additional bureaucratic layers; (d) Encourage individual specialized agencies at the field level to participate fully in all aspects of the resident coordinator system; (e) Establish, in consultation with recipient governments, a clearer division of responsibilities for the resident coordinator and individual funds, programmes and specialized agencies; (f) Enhance the responsibility and authority of the resident coordinator for the planning and coordination of programmes and allowing him/her to propose, in full consultation with the government, to the heads of the funds, programmes and specialized agencies, the amendment of country programmes, and major projects and programmes, where required, to bring them into line with the country strategy note.	March 1993	Establishment of CCPOQ Working Group under the lead of the UN;
		June 1993-94	Meetings of CCPOQ Working Group;
		September 1993 March 1994	Review of key issues at CCPOQ and JCGP and appropriate follow-up;
		1994	Consideration of appropriate changes agreed to at CCPOQ and JCGP and reporting to ECOSOC;
		1995	Assessment of the Resident Coordinator functions as part of the triennial review.
B. Coordination mechanisms	Paras. 36, 38 (d), 39 (c), 40 and 41 guide work on this subject. The following targets were established: (a) Strengthen the resident coordinator function to assist governments in mobilizing technical expertise from both inside and outside the un system and to ensure coordination at the country level through, inter alia, the country strategy note; (b) Resident coordinators to establish, where required, close cooperation with the funds, programmes and agencies at the regional and sub-regional level, in order to respond to specific requests by recipient governments; (c) Ensure, in the context of the country strategy note, that representatives of JCGP, and all un system organizations, consult with and take account of any views of the resident coordinator in the context of major programming exercises before reporting on major programming and policy issues to headquarters. (d) Where justified and not yet operating, establish in consultation with host governments an appropriate field-level committee, comprising UN system representatives, which will serve as a UN coordinating mechanism under the leadership of the resident coordinator; (e) Ensure that the UN coordination mechanisms undertake advisory functions, including the provision of guidance and advice on proposed programmes of funding organizations, the review of agency sector strategies and evaluation and the investigation of specific problems and issues requiring a coordinated response.	April 1993	Letters to the field;
		July 1993	Issue of coordination mechanism part of working group;
		Sept. 1993	Continue monitoring of coordination mechanisms;
		Sept.-Dec.'93	Consultations on implementation in light of field experience, including recipient governments;
		1994	On-going monitoring and strengthening;
		1995	Assessment as part of the triennial review.

SUBJECT AND REFERENCES	GUIDELINES AND TARGETS	BENCH-MARKS
continued... RESIDENT COORDINATOR SYSTEM		
C. Headquarters and field-level support	Paragraphs 38 (a), (b) and 39 (f) guide work on this subject. The following targets were established: (a) Achieve a commitment of the funds, programmes and specialized agencies to work together to integrate assistance provided by the United Nations system into the development process of recipient countries in a fully coordinated manner; (b) Tailor the united nations system at the country level, taking into account the views of the recipient government, to the country's specific developmental needs in such a way that it corresponds to ongoing and projected cooperation programmes rather than to the institutional structure of the united nations; (c) Define the responsibility in the relevant inter-agency coordination mechanisms, in particular JCGP, for providing clear guidance to resident coordinators and for ensuring that they are provided with the necessary support both at the headquarters and the field level.	June 1993-94: Review in CCPOQ Working Group; 1993-1994: Review of key issues at CCPOQ and JCGP and appropriate follow-up; 1994: Introduction of any appropriate changes agreed to at CCPOQ and JCGP and reporting to ECOSOC; 1995: Assessment of the resident coordinator functions as part of the triennial review.
D. Recruitment issues	Paragraphs 37 and 39 (d) guide work on this subject. The following targets were established: (a) Pay particular attention, in selecting resident coordinators, to quality, relevant broad development experience, managerial and team-building skills, and the capacity to develop effective and coherent coordination of the un system as a whole and to integrate individual components and strategies into the development process of the country; (b) Broaden the pool of qualified development professionals eligible for appointment as UNDP resident representatives/ resident coordinators to the members of JCGP, together with increased transparency in the selection process.	April 1993: Consideration at JCGP high-level meeting of steps required to broaden the recruitment pool; May- 1993: JCGP consultations; July 1993: Review of issue in context of CCPOQ working group; 1995: Assessment of the resident coordinator functions as part of the triennial review.

SUBJECT AND REFERENCES	GUIDELINES AND TARGETS	BENCH-MARKS	
THEMATIC ISSUES			
A. Science and technology for development	In paragraph 20 of its resolution 47/199, the GA requested this session of the ECOSOC to consider, through the Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD), to the 1992 report of the S-G on the comprehensive policy review of operational activities of the United Nations system. This should serve as a means to examine the contribution of the operational activities of the UN system to the enhancement of the national capacities of developing countries in the field of science and technology, and to make appropriate recommendations thereon. Moreover, the CSTD draft resolution before this session of ECOSOC requests the S-G eventually to prepare, a report for the coordination segment containing, inter alia an analysis and action-oriented proposals to improve the coordination mechanisms of organs, programmes and specialized agencies, including the World Bank, involved in the science and technology activities of the United Nations system.	April 1993 July 1993	Consideration by CSTD; Consideration by ECOSOC of draft resolution.
B. Human development	In paragraph 47 of its resolution 47/199, the GA reaffirmed the importance of human development, including human resources development, and requests the UN system to strengthen the support given by its operational activities, at the request of recipient countries, to sectors vital to human development. The resolution does not ask for reporting on this subject, although paragraphs 54 and 55 could be interpreted as covering this provision of the resolution. In view of the fact that other reports are submitted on this subjects to various intergovernmental bodies, including this Council and the GA, some guidance in this regard is required.	On-going	
C. Economic and social reforms	In paragraphs 48 and 49 of resolution 47/199, the GA recognized that the UN system has a role to play in assisting countries undergoing deep economic and social reforms and requested the S-G to ensure that the development activities of the UN system in new recipient countries are carried out on the basis of an integrated, unified, cost-effective and innovative approach to development cooperation and presence in the countries concerned. It may be recalled that further to ECOSOC resolution 1992/40 entitled "Activities of the United Nations System in the Baltic States and the Commonwealth of Independent States", a report was submitted to the 47th session of the GA, as an addendum to the report on the comprehensive policy review of operational activities of the UN system. That report provided information on support being provided and planned for this region by the UN system. These efforts are being carried forward on the basis of resolution 47/199 and decisions reached at other inter-governmental bodies of the UN system, particularly the Governing Council of UNDP as well as conclusions reached at the level of ACC, and actions taken by the S-G in response to requests of the concerned countries.	On-going	

/...

Annex II

THE COUNTRY STRATEGY NOTE

A. Basic principles

Purpose

1. The country strategy note should be formulated by interested recipient Governments with the assistance of and in cooperation with the United Nations system in accordance with the principles established in General Assembly resolution 47/199, paragraph 9. In particular, the country strategy note must be based on the priorities and plans of recipient countries and should be designed to ensure the effective integration of assistance provided by the United Nations system in the development process of countries. It should facilitate accountability and the assessment and evaluation of the impact and sustainability of United Nations assistance.

2. The country strategy note will be developed in all countries where the Government so chooses. It should be a mechanism for substantive assessment of key development issues of concern to the country and, above all, for mobilizing United Nations assistance in a collaborative manner. It should focus on areas where the United Nations system (collectively or individually) could make a significant difference.

Content

3. The country strategy note should truly reflect the national priorities of the recipient Government. It should also build on and be consistent with such internationally approved strategies as the International Development Strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade, the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the 1990s and thematic programmes of action emanating from the governing bodies of the United Nations system and the General Assembly.

4. The country strategy note should focus on those key areas for which the United Nations system collaboration will make a distinct difference and where the United Nations system has an advantage. It should be concerned with the full range of potential cooperation, not only technical cooperation (policy advice, along with substantive and management services), material and financial inputs and human resources, but also food aid.

Coordination

5. In accordance with paragraph 9 of Assembly resolution 47/199, the contribution of the United Nations system to the country strategy note should be formulated under the leadership of the resident coordinator, in order to ensure greater coordination and cooperation at the field level.

6. In this regard, the country strategy note should serve as a broad framework for the project and programme preparation processes of the respective United Nations organizations. It shall not substitute for them. Each organization

must remain accountable for the use of its funds in accordance with its mandates and procedures and through the established direct links with its government counterparts. It is the responsibility of each organization to ensure that its analytical and operational projects and programmes are supportive and consistent with the overall country strategy note.

7. The country strategy note should be fully taken into account by United Nations system field representatives, when carrying out major programming exercises.

8. Necessary steps need to be taken to establish an appropriate field committee, in accordance with paragraphs 40 and 41 of Assembly resolution 47/199.

9. The resident coordinator has a special responsibility to ensure the coherence of the contribution of the United Nations system to the country strategy note. To this end, she/he should form subgroups focused on the key themes of the country strategy note. These subgroups should be chaired by the organization or individual best suited to the task (including the resident coordinator) and should operate under the overall guidance of the resident coordinator.

10. In order to cooperate with and support the Government in preparing the country strategy note and to accommodate the fact that not all agencies or United Nations bodies are represented at the country level, the resident coordinator will invite those organizations not represented to submit a written input or send a representative to participate in the drafting of a country strategy note.

B. Procedures

Team effort

11. The country strategy note is prepared by Governments of interested recipient countries with the assistance of and in cooperation with the United Nations system under the leadership of the resident coordinator.

12. In carrying out his/her task, the resident coordinator should work with the team of United Nations organizations present or actively involved in the country, working on a collegial and consensual basis, with the resident coordinator as the team leader.

13. In accordance with paragraph 9 of Assembly resolution 47/199, the country strategy note should be transmitted to the governing bodies of United Nations organizations as a reference for the consideration of their specific country programme and projects.

C. Linking the operational, research and regional capacities

14. Full use needs to be made of the analytical and normative roles of the specialized agencies (for agencies without independent field representation,

this should be provided from their headquarters). Their work should be central to the contribution of the United Nations to the country strategy notes, bearing in mind the fact that some activities may have a regional or global dimension. Likewise, stronger links need to be made with the research work now being carried out at the headquarters level, which might also themselves benefit from stronger links with field practitioners. Finally, there is still untapped potential in the regional organizations and greater use should be made of regional networks.

D. Links with Bretton Woods institutions

15. The United Nations team should have more extensive mutual consultation with the Bretton Woods institutions. In accordance with national priorities, the contribution of the United Nations to the country strategy note should be based, inter alia, on interaction with key exercises such as the formulation of policy framework papers, structural or sectoral adjustment programme loans, public investment programmes and public expenditure programmes. This interaction is to support both complementary roles and help bring to the fore viewpoints which United Nations organizations may be able to provide from their unique perspective. These links should also help ensure that Governments have access to a broad range of policy advice.

E. Links with other external donors

16. The country strategy note, along with the analytical work underlying its preparation, could help facilitate more effective participation by the United Nations system in donor-wide groups, such as consultative groups and round tables.

17. The country strategy note could also be useful to external donors seeking analytical advice and therefore help mobilize a wide range of donors behind key government priorities.

F. Using targets and a programme approach

18. To the extent possible, and as agreed by the Government, the country strategy note should highlight key development goals and targets that the United Nations system should help support. Many monitorable targets have already been established by universally agreed upon strategies. The country strategy note should help establish a process for reviewing and evaluating the degree to which United Nations system assistance is actually helping support progress towards these targets and thus being provided in a flexible and effective manner - a key part of moving to a programme approach.

G. Evaluation and reporting

19. The utilization and impact of the country strategy note will be evaluated at the initiative of the Government.

20. Evaluations should ideally be carried out in cooperation with the United Nations system. These would provide a common basis for a review of progress made and problems encountered by the respective partners.

Annex III

THE PROGRAMME APPROACH

A. Considerations relating to the promotion of the programme approach

The national programme as the basis of the programme approach

1. The programme approach can be said to assume a hierarchy of decision-making at the national level on national development issues that determine whether and how a programme approach might be followed by a Government. At the top of the hierarchy is a national development goal, presumably determined in response to existing conditions or problems. At the next level down, the Government considers a development strategy - how best to achieve the development goal. The strategic choice may or may not lead to a decision that a national programme is the best option. When a Government chooses to create or revitalize a national programme as the vehicle for achievement of the national goal, it has opted for a programme approach. The national programme is a coherent set of policies, strategies, activities and investments designed to achieve the national development goal. Implementation of a national programme often requires external assistance. Under the programme approach, donors respond to this request by formulating and negotiating a programme of support for the national programme. This programme of support may be made up of various components or projects, depending on the modality used by the donor organization and the degree of flexibility it is permitted to use in providing direct budget support. The core of a programme approach by external donors is the use of their funds in a form best suited to achieving programme goals, no longer structured by projects but targeted to objectives.

2. In the context of this conceptual framework, it is generally agreed that the national programmes, goals or strategies are preconditions for the programme approach and that ownership of the programme and responsibility for programme development belong to the Government.

3. Section B of the present annex contains a common interpretation of the programme approach by the United Nations system. However, the various agencies of the system have had to respond in different ways in operationalizing the concept of the programme approach when developing their own programmes of assistance.

A holistic response from the United Nations system

4. The ACC common framework foresees a coherent and coordinated United Nations system response to a national strategy and programme framework. It states that an analytical synthesis of national programme frameworks would provide the basis for a policy and strategy framework for the United Nations system's operational activities in a country. It further declares that the value of the system's contribution will depend on its ability to provide a holistic response to national plans and priorities.

5. All United Nations development system organizations are interested in coordinating their assistance to Governments. The application of a programme approach is seen as laying a basis for the coordination of external contributions to national programmes. However, a holistic or coordinated response from the United Nations system implies some kind of coordinated planning among United Nations organizations. The United Nations resident coordinator system has been strengthened to respond to this need.

Assistance in programme development

6. Many organizations have already started to follow a programme approach in the programming of their cooperation at the national level. In countries where national programme frameworks exist, country programmes are designed both in the context of and in support of such national frameworks. In those countries where such a framework does not exist, the United Nations development system may assist developing countries, at their request, in formulating such frameworks. Flexibility will nevertheless be required in determining whether a national programme framework should be made a prerequisite for the provision of agency assistance.

Accountability for national programmes versus accountability for resources provided by United Nations organizations

7. The common framework lists as its first objective recognition of the central role, ownership and accountability of the Government for national programmes. In other words, the Government has the overall responsibility for the success or failure of a national programme. United Nations organizations are accountable to their governing bodies for the resources they provide in support of national programmes. Thus, the various kinds of suggested or required documentation that describe United Nations organizations support for a national programme - for example, programme support documents, programme component documents or project documents - are prepared not only for planning purposes but also for accountability.

8. United Nations organizations are required to take appropriate measures to fulfil the accountability requirements of both their governing bodies and the eventual funding source. These same requirements, by mandating certain formats and procedures, add complexity and difficulty to the coordination, simplification and harmonization of the United Nations system response to government programme needs.

United Nations organization country programmes

9. The term "programme approach", which defines programme as the national programme of a Government, poses some semantic and practical problems. One common usage of the word programme occurs in the term "country programme" of a United Nations organization. This usage defines the programme as the systematic presentation of activities, projects and other support that will be provided by a United Nations organization in the context of national needs. Such support may or may not be provided to formally established national programmes. In many United Nations organizations, particularly funding organizations, the country programme document is the basis for approval of country-level resource allocation by the organization's governing body.

10. The semantic problem is simply that under the programme approach the programme is that of the Government, whereas in country programme usage the programme is that of the United Nations organization.

11. The practical problem is that both these connotations have important operational significance. The evaluation process will therefore have to take account, on the basis of field trials, of the degree of flexibility required and the interrelationship between an organization's planning strategy and the implementation of its technical cooperation programmes.

Advocacy roles of United Nations organizations

12. The programme approach promotes a broad-ranging dialogue between United Nations bodies and recipient countries on national development goals, policies, strategies and programmes and ways in which United Nations bodies may support them. It should facilitate a better mutual understanding of developing country aspirations and plans and United Nations body mandates, priorities and comparative advantage.

13. It should ensure both a greater degree of convergence between each United Nations body's activities in support of national programmes and enhanced collaboration between United Nations bodies in support of national programmes. It will, however, raise some practical problems. For example, it will render evaluation more difficult because it will not be easy to ascertain the impact of the United Nations body's contribution to a national programme. Again, it may make issues such as targeting the poor more problematic. It may also increase the risk of dependency to the extent that recipient Governments may come to rely on existing or imminent levels of support to national programmes.

Conclusion

14. This section has focused on the ACC common framework for the programme approach. Further review is essential, in view of the evolving nature of programme approach concepts and the growing body of field experience, as well as its use by participating Governments and their reactions to this experience.

15. The governing bodies of United Nations organizations have established over time various mandatory formats and procedures for the formulation, approval and implementation of assistance in each organization. These formats and procedures are directly linked to the accountability requirements that the governing bodies have set out for the organizations. The terminology and procedures of these requirements may complicate the shift to a programme approach. Measures towards harmonization should therefore be taken.

16. The ACC common framework provides the basic elements for a common interpretation of the programme approach. But applications of the programme approach by United Nations organizations vary widely. Thus, the question arises as to how strictly the common framework, or any common interpretation, is to be applied by United Nations organizations. Is the programme approach to be understood and agreed in principle only or in all procedural details as well? Is there only one acceptable interpretation of the programme approach or are there acceptable variations, even different versions? How can it be adapted by agencies with very focused technical functions? A diversity in the application

of the programme approach will have to be recognized. Testing and review of the application of the programme approach must be undertaken on a system-wide basis in collaboration with Governments, with a view to greater convergence, if possible.

B. The programme approach: a common United Nations framework

Objectives

1. The objectives are as follows:

(a) Recognition of the central role, "ownership" and accountability of the Government;

(b) Enhancement of capacity-building, self-reliance and sustainability;

(c) Internalizing of external inputs and ensuring greater relevance, flexibility, cost-effectiveness and impact in relation to national programmes and priorities;

(d) Recognition of the multisectoral character of many development objectives;

(e) Elaboration of a national strategy and programme framework into which may be integrated a coherent and coordinated United Nations system response, especially in terms of substantive support.

Definitions

Programme

2. A programme is a coherent set of policies, strategies, activities and investments designed to achieve a specific time-bound national development objective or set of objectives.

Programme approach

3. The pursuit of national development goals through cohesive national programmes. Such an approach by national authorities will permit United Nations system inputs to be merged with national and other external inputs in support of programmes that have been conceived by the host country with such external assistance as it may seek. a/

Guiding principles

4. The formulation of national development plans (programme(s)/framework(s), priorities and objectives) is the exclusive responsibility of the Governments of the recipient countries. b/ National plans and priorities or objectives constitute the only viable frame of reference for national programming of operational activities. c/

5. Recipient Governments also retain the sole responsibility for coordinating external assistance and the principal responsibility for its design and management. d/

6. The exercise by Governments of the above responsibilities is crucial to the optimal use of external assistance. e/ Moreover, the coherence, logic and general quality of its planning framework could significantly influence the volume of external resources available to the Government. a/

7. The existence of a national framework(s) and the commitment to a programme approach to development by the Government concerned is a necessary precondition for such an approach to be followed by an external donor; there is, in fact, no substitute for such commitment and leadership by the Government. a/

8. The existence of a national framework(s) will also better enable other partners to provide such assistance as would facilitate the internalization by Governments of external assistance, through the adoption of a programme approach. An analytical synthesis of a national framework(s) would provide the basis for a policy and strategy framework for United Nations system operational activities in a country.

9. Where such a framework(s) does not exist, the United Nations system may assist developing countries, at their request, in developing their multisectoral, sectoral and subsectoral strategies. f/ This would involve a dialogue between the Government and its national partners and, if the Government so desires, the United Nations system and other development partners.

10. Programming processes of the system will depend on the wide range of country-specific situations and must be tailored accordingly. a/ The value of the system's contributions will depend on its ability to provide a holistic response to national plans and priorities. a/

11. The assistance provided by organizations of the United Nations system must be placed where organizations can be most responsive to national priorities; organizations must also take full account of the global and regional policies, strategies and related programmes that the same Member States have decided upon collectively in different forums of the system. These considerations should be addressed in the policy dialogue with Governments in the early stages of negotiations on the elaboration of programmes.

Notes

a/ This concept was communicated to the field in June 1991 in draft guidelines for enhancing programming processes, prepared by the Consultative Committee on Substantive Questions (Operational Activities) of the Administrative Committee on Coordination.

b/ General Assembly resolution 44/211, third preambular paragraph.

c/ Ibid., fourth preambular paragraph.

d/ Ibid., para. 2.

e/ Ibid, para. 2.

f/ General Assembly resolution 46/219, para. 11.

Annex IV

NATIONAL EXECUTION AND IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

Background

1. The primary objective of the operational activities for development of the United Nations system is to promote the self-reliance of developing countries through multilateral cooperation* or, in other words, to contribute to building/strengthening national capacities. It is thus implicit that the nature of the assistance and the relationships between a recipient Government and its development partners will evolve with changing needs and circumstances. The basic role of the United Nations system development cooperation programmes and activities remains one of providing substantive policy advice to Governments and transferring and adapting skills and technology, while optimizing the comparative advantages the United Nations system enjoys over other sources of assistance. The essence of the transfer is know-how, not financial resources, to enable the Government fully to manage its development efforts and achieve an increasing degree of national self-reliance.

2. Recipient Governments have the sole responsibility for the coordination of external assistance and the principal responsibility for its design and management, and the exercise of those responsibilities is crucial to the optimal use of external assistance and to the strengthening and utilization of national capacity. The fuller utilization of national capacities would, moreover, promote the long-term sustainability and greater impact of programmes and projects. It is therefore of particular importance that substance be given to the basic premise that all programmes and projects are national undertakings and are managed by the Government.

Objectives

3. The objectives are as follows:

(a) Recognition of the central role, "ownership", direction and control of the Government;

(b) Enhancement of capacity-building, self-reliance and sustainability, including through the building of national institutions and their management;

(c) Internalizing of external inputs and ensuring greater relevance and impact in relation to national programmes.

---

* In paragraph (e) (i) of the annex to its resolution 3405 (XXX) of 28 November 1975, the General Assembly stated that self-reliance should be promoted in developing countries "by building up, inter alia, their productive capability and their indigenous resources and by increasing the availability of the managerial, technical, administrative and research capabilities required in the development process".

Definitions

4. National execution is a cooperative operational arrangement entailing, inter alia, overall responsibility for the formulation and management of programmes and projects by the recipient country, as well as the recipient country's assumption of accountability for them.

5. Implementation, on the other hand, entails the procurement and delivery of all programme/project inputs and their conversion into programme/project outputs.

Guiding principles

6. The guiding principles are as follows:

(a) All projects should be government-managed to the fullest extent, consistent with available national capacities as determined principally by Governments themselves. National execution should become the norm for programmes and projects funded by the United Nations system. It should be pursued in a pragmatic manner, taking into account the needs and capacities of each developing country;

(b) Governments should assume overall accountability for all programmes and projects; the degree of accountability will similarly vary with the implementation modality and the other circumstances of the programme/project. The roles, responsibilities and accountability of each partner outlined in basic agreements should be further elaborated in each programme/project arrangement;

(c) Irrespective of the implementation modality, a national project director should normally be designated, although the manner and extent to which he/she and the Government choose to exercise their authority will vary with the circumstances of each programme or project;

(d) A project implemented by a technical agency of the United Nations system should remain under the overall management and concomitant accountability of the recipient Government. The technical agency will remain accountable for its inputs to the Government and to the funding organization;

(e) Programmes and projects should reflect the fact that they are government undertakings and thus should initially be formulated without any distinction being drawn between external and national components. They should then be scrutinized to ascertain the optimum degree to which their various components can be met by the recipient country itself. Special attention should be given to components which could be met by national capacities if supplemented by limited external inputs, such as short-term consultancies. The latter and remaining requirements could then be addressed as the externally financed project component within the larger national undertaking;

(f) Governments should continue to have access to the neutral policy, technical advice and support of the United Nations system irrespective of the arrangements finally adopted for implementing such assistance;

(g) All programmes and projects should be appraised by the external funding organization with the assistance of the relevant technical agency;

(h) The choice of the appropriate implementation modality(ies) for the externally financed project or component thereof could cover a range of options, including national implementation, subcontracting to national institutions, technical cooperation among developing countries (TCDC), United Nations agency implementation, external subcontracting, the use of national project personnel, United Nations volunteers or a combination of them;

(i) At both the formulation and appraisal of programmes and projects, in considering the choice of implementation modality, regard should be paid to the existence and availability (without prejudice to the broader development effort) of the technical, administrative and managerial capacities of the recipient Government/institution;

(j) Technical agencies of the system have an important responsibility as policy and technical advisers and as sources of specialized knowledge. Governments should have full access and indeed should be encouraged to utilize these services in respect of all programmes and projects, irrespective of the implementation modality adopted, so as to better ensure their technical viability, quality and impact. Funding organizations of the system should in any case make full use of the capacities of the technical agencies, particularly as a means of ensuring substantive accountability;

(k) The role of the technical agencies of the system would, on request, include substantive policy advice, sectoral and intersectoral studies and other upstream activities and the design and formulation of programmes and projects, irrespective of and without prejudice to the implementation modality to be adopted. Their assistance may also include:

(i) Project identification, project design and formulation;

(ii) Appraisal of project proposals and advice on implementation options;

(iii) Preparation of job descriptions and identification and appraisal of candidates;

(iv) Preparation of equipment specifications or subcontract tender documents, technical appraisal of bids and assistance in negotiations and selection;

(v) Identification and/or organization of training programmes;

(vi) Maintaining rosters of consulting firms, experts and suppliers, as well as contacts with such firms, institutions and universities specifically for operational activities;

(vii) Technical monitoring through reports and participation in tripartite and other reviews;

(viii) Participation in tripartite evaluations;

(ix) Additional technical support required for specific projects, including technical panels, extra support missions, redesign of technical approaches and ad hoc technical information and advice;

(l) In the process of monitoring a project or component, the Government and the funding organization should be encouraged to ensure through relevant mechanisms the involvement of the relevant technical agency or financial institution of the United Nations system, even when it is not involved in execution or implementation, so as to ensure the multilateral character of assistance and accountability to and of the funding source;

(m) All programmes and projects managed or only implemented in part by a national agency/institution should, as far as possible, include specific goals and time-frames for the progressive transfer of all remaining responsibilities to that agency/institution. The aim would be to ensure that the national agency/institution would assume total responsibility for all aspects of the project before the termination of the project cycle. Such an approach would also enhance its sustainability and long-term impact;

(n) The simplification and, as far as appropriate, the harmonization of rules and procedures (including those relating to programmes and project formulation, design, approval processes, monitoring and evaluation, and reporting requirements) should also be actively pursued;

(o) The enhancement of self-reliance calls for concerted efforts by Governments themselves to strengthen national institutional capacities through, for example, the improvement of civil service structures and conditions and of conditions of employment for trained managers and technicians (bearing in mind also the heavy turnover of qualified national personnel) and expanded training programmes. In taking measures to mitigate the effects of current limitations in national capacities, the United Nations system should for its part ensure that these are of a temporary nature, are resorted to on an exceptional basis and are linked to operational plans and timetables for longer-term remedial action by Governments.